

Southern Appalachian Creature Feature Podcasts

Fishing and boating the Chattooga River

Greetings and welcome to the Southern Appalachian Creature Feature.

The Chattooga River is perhaps best known across the nation as the place where the movie *Deliverance* was filmed, beginning what seems like endless banjo and paddling jokes. Locally, the Chattooga enjoys a reputation as home to some of the wildest angling and paddling experiences in the Southern Appalachians.

However, anglers and boaters haven't recently been on the best of terms when it comes to sharing the Chattooga. Years of legal issues have marked the Chattooga, however earlier this year the U.S. Forest Service announced their decision for how Chattooga recreation will be managed. The agreement calls for new opportunities for boating in the winter and early spring between Green Creek in North Carolina and just downstream of Lick Log Creek in South Carolina. Boaters in this section are required to have a permit and limit their paddling to daylight hours when flow reaches 350 cubic feet per second at the USGS Burrells ford gauge. There are also restrictions on boat type and minimum and maximum party size. However, there will be no boating year-round between Lick Log Creek and Highway 28, and area popular with anglers.

Other decisions, aimed at protecting the Chattooga River and the visitor experience at the river, include: maintaining the current prohibition on commercial boating and boating in the tributaries on the upper segment; preventing large woody debris removal without agency approval; and redesigning, relocating or closing some trails and campsites while maintaining sustainable ones

For WNCW and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, this is Gary Peeples.